

4. Types of human development (hard-wired confrontation with a task to be mastered before continued development may occur):

- a. - Physical
- b. - Social
- c. - Spiritual
- d. - Moral
- e. - **Cognitive**

5. Example: Infant developmental tasks:

a. Birth to age 1 year.

b. Often the most challenging developmental task around age 3 (perhaps especially for parents and care-givers) is _____.

i. Although this may appear to be only a physical task, its mastery is dependent on “cognitive” developmental tasks; in other words, the BRAIN must develop in a sequence that allows the child to become correspondingly AWARE in the following sequence:

- A. “I HAVE pottied;”
- B. “I AM pottying;”
- C. “I NEED to potty!”

ii. Once the brain has grown enough , the child has the “cognitive” awareness of how his body feels when, “I need to potty,” (to the great relief of all!)

6. As are all human beings, regardless of chroniological, adolescents are also developing; the overriding developmental tasks for them to grapple with from puberty, on, are:

- a. Identity;
- b. Sexual Integration; and
- c. _____.

8. Who are “adolescents?”

a. Accumulating research indicates that adolescence is now including people up to age 29 and even 30. This includes both teens AND “Millennials,” (Those born between 1982 -1992, or ages 18-28), because of slowing development of the pre-frontal cortex, a type of _____ development. As used here, Teens + Millennials = “Young People”

b. What ARE “cognitive” abilities?

1. Determined by the “cerebral cortex” – the part of the brain that makes us human,1 distinguishing us from other animals.
2. Thinking.
3. Reasoning.
4. “Metacognition” – ability to watch ourselves think.
5. “Executive Functioning,” which includes:
 - A. Planning and Organizing.
 - B. Foreseeing consequences.
 - C. Impulse control.

9. LIFE EXPERIENCE and its impact on the pre-frontal cortex determine development of “Executive Functioning.”

a. Repeated trial and error, and trial and success, in real life experiences and circumstances.

b. What’s happening to young people today in terms of “life experience?” As a group, they have VERY LITTLE or NO life experience.

c. Instead, they spend their time on:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. Other _____

f. Other factors contributing to lack of life experience and understanding of appropriate behavior:

1. Absent or permissive parents.
2. Highly toxic and sexualized culture;
3. Even involved parents have little support from cultural, political institutions and community; unrelated adults no longer feel protective or responsible for welfare of young people.
4. Young people are disempowered, rarely in control, often ignored, stereotyped negatively by adults.
5. Developing an independent identity (differentiation) – which is actually what they are **hard wired to strive for** – is not encouraged by families or culture.

f. If we accept the research, we might see juveniles as children (as does the Family and Penal Codes, as well as the U.S. Supreme Court), and feel compassion for them because their lack of experience and lack of adult guidance.

10. Trends in Criminalization of Juvenile Behavior

- a. Acknowledgement in 1899 that juveniles are **not “little adults,” or even “young adults;”** They are children, who need to be protected and dealt with in a separate judicial _____.
- b. By 1967, however, there was a new awareness of serious losses at stake for young people in Juvenile Court. US Supreme Court decided teens are entitled to many protections afforded adult criminal defendants, including right to counsel. *In Re Gault* (1967).
- c. In the 1980's and 90's, young people were thought to be so out of control and such a threat to society, the trend shifted to holding them much more seriously accountable, and even the death penalty was upheld for juvenile offenders. *Stanford v. Ky*, US Supreme Court (1986).
- d. Current trend is more science- based, and applies the research on teen _____ development, and its impact on the young persons inability to form required criminal intent.

e. Conflicts between these trends continue, as Municipal Court personnel often see young people in court for things such as throwing spit balls in class, adding to docket loads.

10. Considering that young people are struggling to achieve their developmental tasks, AND are simply unable to consistently plan, organize, foresee consequences, and use appropriate _____, what can we do to de-escalate (rather than escalate) situations we confront in our Courts where teens are misbehaving or failing to follow rules?

Strategies for De-Escalation

Do

Examine your own beliefs and expectations of young people in light of the research discussed today, and commit to changing them accordingly.

Upon seeing young people, immediately give them eye contact, smile, ask how they are (they aren't accustomed to this, and they respond beautifully!).

Listen before speaking, repeat exactly what you hear, and ask if that's right.

Stick with one issue at a time.

Focus on behavior, not on value judgments (adjectives!) on the person or about the behavior. (Example would be, "you forgot to bring the papers the judge told you to bring," as opposed to "you were irresponsible.")

Breathe calmly (slow, full breaths – literally physiologically changes stress response of body to relaxation response!).

Be flexible – have the possibility that you could change your mind as an option.

Be responsible for what you say and HOW you say it. (i.e., would you talk to another adult like that? If not, stop it!)

In the event of extremely disruptive or disrespectful behavior:

In a firm, but friendly, neutral, voice, state the rule or requirement, and ask that it be respected. If you can, offer an alternative option that's acceptable to you.

If the behavior is repeated, remind the teen of the rule, and warn him that if it happens again, he will have to leave the room (or whatever consequence S

If, the behavior is nevertheless repeated, tell the child (again, in a neutral, neutral tone of voice) that you see she has chosen to leave the room (or other consequence), and must now do so. Call a security guard if necessary to follow through. (VERY important to follow through!!!)

Strategies for De-Escalation

AVOID

An irritable or angry or sarcastic voice or facial expression.

Mimicking the young person.

Raising your voice

Interrupting.

Threatening.

Judging the young person rather than describing the offending behavior.

Getting stuck in the past.

Having to get the last word in.

Having to win.

Saying “always” or “never.”